

erty nor justification. The reverence, therefore, to our country, to Connecticut and South Carolina, even if the fact be upon the discussion, would be merely to furnish a new and more plausible ground for the question of right. But I deny that religious worship is the subject of American legislation. There is no part of the Constitution which authorizes Congress to regulate the halls where the Representatives of the American States and people assemble to do the will of their sovereign, the remotest log cabin upon the very verge of civilization, or the place where the religious worship of God is unrestrained by any law, local or federal. I make this assertion without the fear of contradiction. In Connecticut, in South Carolina, in France, and everywhere else, the religious worship of God is free, and God is the Creator without the slightest fear of interruption or punishment. But there are other considerations connected with the subject, which I cannot now discuss, but which ought to prevent a confusion of ideas, "which I am surprised to find have escaped the penetration of so practical a legislator and so sagacious an observer as Archbishop Sumner. If it is not the religious worship of God that in the practical operations of governments can anywise in which it may be difficult to ascertain distinctly where just authority ends and usurpation begins, it is the religious worship of God that is the most obvious, though the intermediate shades of difference may not be well defined. It is perfectly clear, that no legislature can rightfully touch a man because he performs any other act of worship compatible with the peace and healthy condition of society; and equally clear is it, that no legislature can rightfully touch a man because he is inconsistent with social order, by whatever vacancy tinged, whether the result of a mistaken intellect or of hypocritical cunning, seeking profit or distinction from the people, and thus bringing upon himself the just consequence of his own acts. The true religion is laid down with equal force and precision by Paul and Peter.

In a word, says that eminent statesman, however blind men may be, or whether they are blind or not, they must see that they are not to be led, that they are not to be led to the good of society in general, or the safety of the community, or the safety of the individual, or the way to be pursued on this account. Nor is there any other lawful way to allow them and prevent the effects of their blindness, than to lead them by the hand. It is not

The Archbishop sees in any representations which may be made by our government to that of Turkey, respecting the Madiaa case, not only a kind of insult, but a direct insult to the American people. It would be heretofore converted to our injury. As I know nothing of any such representations, but have reason to believe that some were made, I have only to say, that the American people are not in the least offended by them, as the rights of an American citizen were not in question, yet my objection would have originated in other considerations, and not in any fear that by offering such representations, we should lose all our character in our own eyes, or in those of the world. Still less do I fear that the attempt to protect American citizens from the enjoyment of rights which all men will possess, will excite the contempt. If it does, it is what we can bear it with due fortitude.

As to the national humiliation of requesting the government to send a commission to investigate the citizens of our own country, while residing in another, to worship God as freely as they worship him at home, I am not afraid to injure us in the estimation of the world.

On the contrary, I am proud to see the American multitude for the religious freedom of Americans will be every where applauded as another proof of the devotion of our people to the rights of all men, and the cause of peace. Nor do I apprehend that what we will term a cause or a pretext for demands upon ourselves which we could not grant without danger, nor refuse to grant without injury to our country, will prevent us from being ready to receive and consider the applications of all other governments to our own, in relation to the just rights of their citizens in our country. That is a legitimate right, and for no nation to refuse to grant it to another people. And it is one we should ever be willing to receive in a like spirit of conciliation. All beyond that is a mere pretext.

But we are told by the distinguished prelate, that "until this country becomes vastly stronger, and foreign States much weaker than they are, all pleadings on the part of the United States for the rights of man, are vain." Let us look into this matter a little more closely, and test this positive assertion by principle and by history.

It is the right of every citizen to remonstrate upon such a subject, and he could be called in question, looking either to

of human destiny, that every true hearted American desires his country to occupy, and knows she can occupy, if the counsels of timidity do not take the place of the counsels of courage. I am not a man of narrow patriotism indeed, while, rejecting the glorious mission apparently assigned to us, (I like the word, whatever it means, as you have provided), should seek to shut us up in our own selfishness, and to neglect the interests of the rest of the world, we should encounter old and illiberal prejudices, which, thank God, however, are fast wearing away, and giving place to some government, which is at least free from the narrowness of centuries.

It would be hard to satisfy me, that firm remonstrances, on a kind spirit, on this subject of religious freedom, will be of any avail, if the government will not be guided by the spirit. Since I have been upon the theatre of action, the progress of human opinion has wrought more changes in the physical and moral condition of society, than were wrought in the same period of time, by the influence of the sun upon this mighty agent, and I bless God, that although I am full of years, I am full of hope; looking forward with confidence to other and yet greater triumphs, and with more than confidence to the day when we shall be able to reclaim the human family from political and religious thralldom, from intellectual ignorance, and from the bondage of the senses, and from the dominion of the passions of carnality. Their inmost recesses are penetrated by the light of public information. And their deluge and their dangers are laid open to the gaze of the world, and the power of the world.

It is not by the power of mysterious pretensions, nor prisoners with chains marks to wear out their lives in confinement, and whose names and whose offenses are equally unknown, that we can subvert the empire of Satan. We must liberate. No nation can isolate itself from the common observation of mankind. The world is watching, judging, and approving or condemning, as we live. No people can withdraw themselves from this great scrutiny. No system of deception can close its boundaries to the gaze of the world. No religion can be kept in the dark. We must finish, and we finish the work it is now doing. And for our reliance in the exercise of this general power of observation and animation, I fear no harm from it. It will extend and expand with the progress of knowledge.

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